

**CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED WILD FLORA
AND FAUNA (CITES)
THE TWENTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE ANIMALS COMMITTEE (AC29)**

Feedback Report prepared by Patience Gandiwa and Roseline Chikerema – August 2017

1.1 AC29 Introduction

The twenty-ninth meeting of the Animals Committee (AC29) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was held on 18-22 July 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland.

CITES Secretary-General John Scanlon welcomed participants and underlined the AC's key role in bringing science to the decision-making and implementation processes of CITES.

The AC welcomed Mathias Lörtscher (Switzerland) as the new Chair. The AC addressed, among other issues: the Review of Significant Trade (RST); periodic review of the Appendices; captive-bred and ranched specimens; nomenclature; and species-specific matters. Chair Lörtscher established several working groups and a drafting group

1.2 AC29 Parallel Working Group Session 1

The working group on **(i) Review of Significant Trade**, chaired by Europe representative Vincent Fleming (UK) and North America representative Rosemarie Gnam (US), met throughout the day, discussing an exhaustive list of species/country recommendations. Zimbabwe actively participated in this working group contributing to the working group recommendations for the AC.

Other working groups focussed on **(ii) Sharks and Rays**, chaired by Hugh Robertson (New Zealand), Oceania representative. The working group on **(iii) Sturgeons**, chaired by Carolina Caceres (Canada), alternate representative for North America. The working group on **(iv) Snakes**, chaired by AC Chair Mathias Lörtscher (Switzerland), reviewed the document on the conservation, sustainable use of, and trade in snakes, including the proposed guidance for CITES Scientific Authorities concerning NDFs for snakes. The group also discussed python traceability standards. The working group on **(v) Nomenclature** issues, chaired by CITES nomenclature expert Peter Paul van Dijk, also met and participants addressed implications of new nomenclature insights with regard to African and Asian lions as well as other affected species

1.3 AC29 Parallel Working Group Session 2

On 20 July 2017, AC29 met in parallel working groups in the morning and a plenary session involving participants from all working groups was held in the afternoon. In addition, there were several other side events held in the afternoon and in the evening.

Six working groups were held on: **(i)Captive-bred and ranched specimens** (chaired by AC Chair Mathias Lörtscher, Switzerland), **(ii)Periodic review** (chaired by Rosemarie Gnam, US/North America), **(iii)Corals** (co-chaired by Simon Nemptsov, Israel/Europe, and Giyanto Giyanto, Indonesia/Asia), **(iv)Freshwater Stingrays** (chaired by Marcel Enzo Calvar Agrelo, Uruguay), **(v)Banggai Cardinalfish** (chaired by Carolina Caceres, Canada/North America), and **(vi)Eels** (chaired by Vincent Fleming, UK/Europe).

Zimbabwe actively participated in the Captive-bred and Ranched specimens. The working group developed a list of species-country combinations to be addressed under the new process for review.

Zimbabwe also participated in the Periodic Review working group where participants identified 20 animal taxa to potentially review during the next two inter-sessional periods (from CoP17 to CoP19). They also explored funding options for, and ideas to facilitate, periodic reviews.

A working group on the definition of the term “**Appropriate and Acceptable destinations**” met briefly at lunch to organize its intersessional work. Zimbabwe had interest in this working group and the general recommendation agreed-on is to ensure reference is made to the Scientific and Management Authorities of the sending and receiving parties

1.4 AC29 Plenary Session

The twenty-ninth meeting of the Animals Committee (AC29) convened in plenary throughout the day on Friday, 21 July, for final resolutions before the joint meeting with the Plants Committee.

The African Wild dog, quotas for Leopard hunting trophies, African grey Parrots, and progress in the development of an identification guide for the genus *Abronia* (Alligator lizards) dominated the discussions.

Participants also considered reports of the various working groups, adopting (and reflecting-on) the recommendations from the groups on snakes, nomenclature, sturgeons, and sharks, with various amendments. Reports on the Review of Significant Trade, the periodic review, corals, freshwater stingrays, Queen conch, Banggai cardinalfish, and captive breeding were considered and adopted.

The African Lion was also discussed among other species such as Eels, the Black sea bottlenose Dolphin, Tortoises and freshwater Turtles. A recommendation was adopted that the African Lion was recently subjected to review and therefore it would not be necessary to have it listed for another review as range states are still implementing decisions made at Co17.

1.5 Closure of the Animals Committee (AC29) meeting and Opening of the Plants Committee (PC23) meeting

On Saturday, 22 July, delegates gathered for the closure of the 29th meeting of the Animals Committee and opening of the 23rd meeting of the Plants Committee, hence a joint meeting of the AC and PC.

The joint morning session was chaired by AC Chair Mathias Lörtscher and addressed: a planned review of the terms of reference for the AC and PC; the selection of candidates to serve on a working group led by the Standing Committee (SC) to review and update the CITES Strategic Vision; and a proposed assessment of the conservation status and potential for recovery efforts for Appendix I-listed species. The progress regarding CITES collaboration with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was also discussed.

The joint afternoon session was chaired by PC Chair Adrienne Sinclair (Canada), the AC and PC considered: cooperative work on strengthening conservation and sustainable production of selected Appendix II species with particular focus on North America; Appendix III listings; country-wide significant trade reviews; capacity building and identification materials; and non-detriment findings.

In the PC opening, the committee welcomed new PC Chair Sinclair adopted the agenda, programme of work and rules of procedure, and admitted observers. After the joint session of AC23 and PC29 a reception was held in the evening in the Geneva's Botanical Gardens (Jardin Botanica) for all participants.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)

The twenty-third meeting of the Plants Committee (PC23)

Feedback Report prepared by Patience Gandiwa and Roseline Chikerema

1.1 PC 23 Introduction

On Monday, 24 July, PC Chair Adrienne Sinclair (Canada) re-convened the 23rd meeting of the Plants Committee (PC23).

Morning session: The strategic plan for 2016-2019 (CoP17-CoP18) was considered, Review of Significant Trade (RST) in specimens of Appendix-II species was discussed and several other topics in-line with the Agenda and these include, timber identification, African tree species, and neo-tropical tree species. In considering the RST, PC Chair Sinclair underscored the importance of these reviews, calling them “core CITES business.”

Afternoon session: PC23 considered the periodic review of the appendices, rosewood timber species, standard nomenclature, annotations for Appendix II orchids, East African sandalwood, and definition of the term “artificially propagated.”

Reflections on the PC mandate were shared by delegates and some divergent views were expressed on discussing implementation issues within the scientific body. Multiple agenda items raised questions of definitions and interpretation of terms, with most discussions deferred to working groups for more detailed assessment. The need for balancing conservation and trade was one of the topical issues highlighted by several participants.

The PC constituted working groups for all the issues discussed. Lengthy discussions took place on the scope of work of the groups, with several participants recalling the limited time and resources of the PC.

The working group on Strategic Planning met and reflected on the PC priorities that should be discussed in the various technical working groups to formulate appropriate recommendations for the Standing Committee.

An *ad hoc* **working group on Annotations**, aimed at informing upcoming Standing Committee (SC) discussions, will also convene a meeting to discuss various Annotation issues

1.2 PC23 Working Group Session 1

Parallel working group sessions were held throughout the day on Tuesday, 25 July.

In the morning, working groups met on the Review of Significant Trade (RST), timber identification, periodic review of the appendices, and East African sandalwood (*Osyris lanceolata*). A working group on Nomenclature met during lunch. In the afternoon, working

groups met on the definition of the term “artificially propagated” and on rosewood timber species.

In the discussions of the working group on **(i) Review of Significant Trade (RST)**, chaired by PC Nomenclature Specialist Noel McGough, species-country combinations for review were selected.

The working group on **(ii) Timber identification** focused on harmonizing and connecting reference collections and was chaired by Vera Teresinha Rauber Coradin (Brazil), representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean.

The **(iii) Periodic Review** group, chaired by North America representative Isabel Camarena Osorno (Mexico), decided on plant species to recommend for periodic review and discussed ways to finance and facilitate periodic reviews. Zimbabwe participated in this working group and volunteered to conduct a review of the status of cycad species endemic to Zimbabwe.

The working group on **(iv) East African sandalwood**, chaired by Africa representative Aurélie Flore Koumba Pambo (Gabon), met to draft a “realistic” workplan for assessing, among other things, the impact of legal and illegal trade on the conservation status of East African sandalwood.

In the working group on the **(v) definition of the term “artificially propagated,”** chaired by Oceania representative Greg Leach (Australia) and Asia alternate representative Joeni Satijo Rahajo (Indonesia), participants considered problems with and potential solutions for different interpretations of terms.

Participants in the working group on **(vi) Rosewood timber species**, chaired by PC Chair Adrienne Sinclair, discussed implementation issues for rosewood and the interpretation of annotation 15 on “non-commercial shipments.”

1.3 PC23 Working Group Session 2

On Wednesday, 26 July, the 23rd meeting of the Plants Committee (PC23) spent the morning in working groups on African tree species, annotations for Appendix-II orchids, and rosewood timber species, and convened in plenary in the afternoon.

Noting that orchids are a “uniquely heterogeneous family,” the working group on **(i) Annotations** for Appendix-II orchids, chaired by alternate Europe representative Ursula Moser (Switzerland), discussed the complexity of value chains that involve orchids and the importance and challenges of engaging industry stakeholders in this work.

The working group on **(ii) African tree species**, chaired by Africa representative Aurélie Flore Koumba Pambo (Gabon), discussed how to facilitate the exchange of experiences among range states, importing countries, and others in the sustainable use and management of CITES-listed African tree species.

In the working group on **(iii) Rosewood timber species**, co-chaired by alternate North America representative Isabel Camarena Osorno (Mexico) and Europe representative Paulo Carmo (Portugal), participants discussed, among other things, issues related to the lack of information to support the formulation of non-detriment findings for rosewood species.

1.4 PC23 Plenary Session

PC Chair Adrienne Sinclair praised participants for their efforts on tackling the “complex” issues addressed in working groups. Participants considered documents and agenda items on: agarwood-producing taxa (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.); African cherry (*Prunus africana*); the outcomes of the international workshop on CITES-listed tree species; and possible amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP15) on implementation of the Convention for timber species. They also noted regional reports as presented by the regional representatives.

All working groups reports were presented and adopted with various suggestions and these include working group reports on periodic review, rosewood timber species, nomenclature, East African sandalwood, definition of the term “artificially propagated,” timber identification, and annotations for Appendix-II orchids. On non-detriment findings (NDF), they also considered the 9-Steps-NDF-Guidance for plants developed by Germany and TRAFFIC.

PC23 discussed Malagasy ebonies, palisanders, and rosewoods, with reports from Madagascar and the Secretariat on related decisions, and heard from Mexico on cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). They considered and agreed (with amendments) to recommendations from working groups on review of significant trade (RST) and African tree species. The PC also re-considered rosewood timber species, agreeing to task the working group chairs to develop a report for the Standing Committee, rather than convening an intersessional working group.

1.5 SIDE MEETINGS & NETWORKING

There were several side meetings that were attended by Zimbabwe’s representatives to the AC and PC, including some self-initiated meetings for strategic alliance building and well as resource mobilisation.

Topics addressed in the various informal discussions included: Capacity building needs for Zimbabwe’s CITES structures, Applicable tools and traceability issues; E-permit system, National Status report on Trade in CITES Species, non-detriment findings (NDFs) for both Animals and Plants, Conservation needs for Zimbabwe’s Keystone species listed under CITES, Support for Research and Ecological monitoring, database management, Baselines for species with data deficiencies, Medicinal plants inventories and specimen identification capacity, Technological applications to combat poisoning and human wildlife conflicts

NB: See attached Bulletin for more detail on AC29 and PC23